

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet to conduct a hearing on Wednesday, February 23, 2000, at 10 a.m., in SD—226.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 23, 2000 at 2 p.m. to hold a closed hearing on intelligence matters.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FORESTS AND PUBLIC LANDS

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Forest and Public Lands of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 23 at 2:30 p.m. to conduct an oversight hearing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SURFACE TRANSPORTATION AND MERCHANT MARINE

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Surface Transportation/Merchant Marine Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet on February 23, 2000, at 10 a.m. on AMTRAK oversight.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Patrick Shank of the Senate Finance Committee be allowed access to the Senate floor for the remainder of the debate on S. 1134.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Patricia L. Lewis, a member of the staff of the Committee on Armed Services, be granted the privilege of the floor during the introduction of the Military Health Care Improvement Act of 2000.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, she has been an invaluable assistant, as has the staff of my committee, together with the staff of Senator LOTT, and others who have been working on this important piece of legislation.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

ACCESS TO FIREARM PARTS

• Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, today in the Detroit Free Press, there is a story

about a potential nightmare in Michigan. The article alleges that Kevin Olender, a felon convicted of assault with a dangerous weapon was preparing an attack on his co-workers in Farmington Hills. According to the article, Olender was able to evade background checks required by the Brady law, by purchasing a gun in parts. Allegedly, Olender was only one part away from finishing the construction of his firearm, and that part was expected within days.

In the end, investigators prevented any shoot-out, but the article highlights another loophole in federal firearm law that gives felons access to firearms which would otherwise be forbidden. I urge my colleagues to close this loophole and the many others in our federal law.

I ask that the Detroit Free Press article about this loophole be printed in the RECORD.

The article follows:

[From the Detroit Free Press, Feb. 23, 2000]

FELON'S GUN CHARGES SHOW NET LOOPHOLE—POLICE SAY SUSPECT WAS ABLE TO BUY PARTS ON-LINE

(By L.L. Brasier and Ruby L. Bailey)

With a credit card and the Internet, Kevin Olender had everything he needed to find parts for an assault rifle.

It was no problem, even for a felon.

Four days after Christmas last year, Olender went shopping. He ordered a \$199.95 parts package for a military-style rifle from Interordnance, an Internet gun dealer based in Monroe, N.C. He bought another parts package from the firm Feb. 4.

Police and prosecutors say Olender, 40, of Wyandotte, was preparing for an assault on co-workers at Computware in Farmington Hills. He only needed one more part, known as a receiver, to finish building a working gun.

The part was on order, police say. But authorities raided his home last Friday and arrested him.

"He was ready to do it," Farmington Hills Police Chief William Dwyer said Tuesday. "I think we saved a lot of lives."

Dwyer said his investigators found evidence that Olender had located the receiver, a palm-sized part that holds pieces together and makes the gun fire, and expected it within days. Dwyer would not say how investigators determined that.

A person with a felony background is prohibited from possessing a gun or ammunition. But there's a loophole in federal law. Though dealers cannot sell a gun without a background check, they can sell gun parts, weapons experts said.

Ulich Wiegand, owner of Interordnance, said he did not check Olender's background when filling his order.

"No, of course not," he said. "We are not required to because we weren't selling him a gun."

Olender was convicted in 1996 in Detroit Recorder's Court of a felony, assault with a dangerous weapon, court records show. He received five years' probation.

Wiegand said he sells many parts packages, but declined to say how many.

"You have to understand, we did not send him guns," Wiegand said. "This is nothing but parts, and he could do nothing with them without a receiver."

Wiegand said his company sells fully assembled weapons only to federally licensed firearm dealers.

But Dwyer said Olender's easy access to gun components on the Internet points out the need for new laws.

"It is like the old West, only with no sheriff in town," Dwyer said. "You've got sexual predators, violent people buying guns. We need to come up with some safeguards."

Olender is being held in the Wayne County Jail on a charge of possessing a firearm as a felon, and using a firearm in a felony.

Olender could face federal charges for possessing ammunition as a felon. Agents for the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms are investigating what charges may be filed, said Vera Fedorak, an agency spokeswoman.

During Friday's raid, authorities recovered two disassembled rifles from Olender's basement, as well as a manual for assembling the guns. They also found hundreds of rounds of ammunition, including steel-nosed bullets designed to penetrate bullet-proof vests.

Investigators found that he was missing receivers, also known as frames, used to hold the gun pieces in place.

To purchase a receiver, Olender should have been subjected to a background check, by law. Dwyer and others would not comment further about the receiver.

Without the receiver, what Olender had was like "a car without a motor," said Victor Reid, co-owner of Midwest Ordnance Gun Shop in Royal Oak.

A receiver would cost \$300 to \$400, he said. The part is regulated by the federal government, has a serial number, and cannot be sold without a license.

"They are virtually impossible to get illegally," said Reid, who said he does not sell gun kits at the store, or on the company's Web site. "It's not an item that you can just go buy."

The packages that Olender bought from the North Carolina firm consisted of gun parts from military weapons dating to the 1950s, and disassembled overseas. The packages are popular among collectors and sportsmen, who acquire the needed receivers through dealers, and reassemble the guns.

Police said they are investigating where Olender got the ammunition.

Concerns about guns and the Internet have prompted federal lawmakers to pursue legislation targeting Internet sales of guns.

Hundreds of Internet sites advertise weapons for sale.

Many are dealers who comply with federal laws. But individuals often don't, said Jim Kessler, policy director for U.S. Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y. Schumer has sponsored a bill that would make it illegal for anyone except licensed gun dealers to buy and sell guns over the Internet. The measure is pending.

"Nobody's watching," Kessler said. "The Internet itself presents a giant loophole in gun laws."

When searching for guns over the Internet, buyers can't legally make the purchase directly on-line, gun experts said.

Buyers scan Web sites where guns are advertised, then contact a dealer and complete the purchase. The dealer must ship the weapon to another gun dealer, who is required to make sure that the buyer fills out the required forms and undergoes a background check.

"It's not like someone can put their credit card in a Web site and get a gun," said Trish Hylton, spokeswoman for the National Rifle Association.